Sound Ethics Expands 2025 Research Collaborations to Advance Ethical AI in Music

Sound Ethics partners with eight universities to shape the future of ethical AI and protect artists' rights in the age of generative music.

Sound Ethics Logo

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, November 13, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Sound Ethics, a research lab and advocacy organization dedicated to addressing the toughest challenges the music industry faces in the era of AI, announced an expansion of its university partnerships for 2025. Eight universities have joined the initiative so far, including UCLA Data Science, UC Irvine Software Engineering, NYU Data Science, UC San Diego Computational Social Science, and UC Santa Barbara Data Science.

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> *James O'Brien, CEO*

LABS TO LEGENDS: BRIDGING RESEARCH AND REAL-WORLD IMPACT

The Labs to Legends program features expanded collaborations with universities, which empowers emerging data scientists and creatives to lead with responsibility in AI-enabled music. By pairing academic rigor with real industry needs, Labs to Legends provides mentorship and technical frameworks focused on attribution, transparency, and compliance. The program also includes an experiential learning track and a startup incubator that supports founders building ethically grounded music tech.

DRIVING ETHICAL AI INNOVATION

Each university team will tackle a distinct challenge at the intersection of AI and music, with priorities that include:

- Best practices for generative music research that respect artist rights and ethical data use
- Frameworks for fair compensation when artist work informs AI systems
- Standards to track rights holders and permissions inside AI applications
- Next-generation generative models built on ethical data and transparent attribution
- Artist-first AI tools that protect creative integrity and put creators in control
- AI agents for music administrators and rights specialists
- Scalable permission systems for millions of artists
- A proposed framework for classifying AI-assisted works with the U.S. Copyright Office

WHY UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS MATTER

Sound Ethics focuses on universities because much of generative music research begins in academic labs. The organization helps teams navigate evolving data sources, ensuring rights-cleared access and compliant workflows so researchers can innovate while safeguarding artists' livelihoods.

VOICES FROM CAMPUS

Faculty and students across Sound Ethics' university partners are bringing their technical skills to projects that connect technology and creativity.

Alex Dekhtyar, a Professor in the Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, said:
"We are excited to partner with Sound Ethics for a Data Science Capstone project this year. Throughout the years of running our capstone we discovered that students gravitate towards projects that blend computing, data analysis and social good. Students will benefit greatly from a project that will have them deal directly with the real challenges faced by the music industry. Working with Sound Ethics helps them see how data science and ethics come together to protect artists in an AI world."

At NYU, students are developing tools that advance fairness and transparency in music. Georgios Ioannou, a Masters student in the NYU Data Science program, said:
"Our team is training and fine-tuning audio generative models, improving metadata for audio sets, and building similarity search tools. It's rewarding to know this work can help make AI systems more transparent and fair to the artists whose work makes it possible."

Meanwhile, Kathleen Pham, B.S. Informatics and Human-Computer Interaction, UC Irvine Informatics and Software Engineering, said her team joined to explore the intersection of innovation and artistic expression.
"We were drawn to this project to explore how technical innovations can serve artistic expression rather than replace it. With AI's rapid growth into the music industry, it's crucial to move forward in developing new pathways for artists to reclaim control over their work and advance transparency in the future of AI."

STATEMENT FROM SOUND ETHICS

James O’Brien, CEO, Sound Ethics, said:
"Universities are where the next generation of AI leaders are being shaped. By expanding our collaborations, we’re ensuring those leaders understand not only how to build powerful tools, but how to build them responsibly. This network allows us to turn research into real impact for artists and the industry."

INVITATION TO COLLABORATE

Sound Ethics invites labels, publishers, rights organizations, and technology companies to participate as mentors, data partners, and early access partners for limited rollouts. Together, the community can build open, transparent, and ethical systems that protect the livelihood of human artists while enabling innovation.

ABOUT SOUND ETHICS

Sound Ethics is a research lab and advocacy organization dedicated to ethical AI in music. The organization develops standards, sources rights-cleared datasets, and partners with universities and industry to ensure AI enhances creativity while preventing exploitation. Learn more at www.soundethics.org.

ABOUT LABS TO LEGENDS

Labs to Legends transforms data-driven research into ethical, scalable AI solutions. Its learning tracks and founder incubator empower innovators to tackle urgent challenges in rights, data ethics, and infrastructure. Learn more at www.labstolegends.org.

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